

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated February 17, 2006. Claims 1-24 are pending.

The formality objection to claim 2 has been addressed and overcome by the changes to claim 2 herein. See section 2 of the Office Action in this regard.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Torihara in view of Fukuoka. This Section 103(a) rejection is respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

First, claim 1 as amended requires that the *light incident surface of the optical conductor is substantially vertical*. For example and without limitation, Fig. 1 of the instant application illustrates that the light incident surface 4c of the optical conductor 4 is substantially vertical in orientation (see also pg. 24, lines 2-8, of the instant specification).

Fukuoka teaches directly away from the aforesaid feature of claim 1. Fukuoka specifically teaches providing a liquid crystal display device by making the end face b of light transmission plate 4a *inclined* and disposing a long-length light source 5 along an inclined surface b (e.g., see the Abstract of Fukuoka). Additionally, Fukuoka discloses the advantage that due to the inclined surface b of the light transmission plate 4a, more light is introduced into the light transmission plate 4a and hence more light is emitted from the plate 4a (see the Abstract of Fukuoka). Accordingly, Fukuoka fails to disclose or suggest that the light incident surface of the optical conductor is substantially vertical as required by claim 1. Moreover, one of ordinary skill in the art would never have modified Fukuoka to make the light incident surface substantially vertical' (instead of inclined) because this would eliminate the advantages stressed and taught by Fukuoka.

Citation to Torihara cannot cure the aforesaid flaws of Fukuoka. In this regard, even the combination of Torihara and Fukuoka fails to meet amended claim 1 because the Office Action's proposed modification would result in a substantially inclined light incident surface b which is precluded by amended claim 1. For at least the aforesaid first reason, claim 1 patentably defines over the cited art.

Second, claim 1 requires a *light scattering section including an engaging portion which is engageable with the projection*; wherein the optical conductor and the light scattering section are located such that an *end of the projection of the optical conductor is located outside the periphery of the effective display area of the liquid crystal panel*. For example and without limitation, Fig. 1 illustrates that the end of the projection 4d of the optical conductor 4 is to the left of line "a" which means it is outside of the periphery of the effective display area. Fig. 1 also illustrates light scattering section 2 which includes an engaging portion that engages the projection 4d. Torihara is discussed in the background section of the instant application, and is illustrated in prior art Fig. 6 of the instant application. Fig. 6 of the instant application illustrates that Torihara fails to disclose or suggest the aforesaid second italicized feature of claim 1. In particular, in Torihara (see Fig. 6 of the instant application) the end "b" of the projection 204d of the optical conductor 204 is *not* to the left of line "a" which means it is *not* outside of the periphery of the effective display area. Moreover, as explained in the U.S. counterpart to Torihara (US 6,412,969), Torihara discloses that the effective viewing area of the device includes the supporting section 6 (see col. 9, lines 50-55), so that an end of the projection cannot be located outside the periphery of the effective display area as required by claim 1. Thus, it will be appreciated that Torihara teaches directly away from the invention of claim 1 in this respect. The background section of the instant specification at pages 2-5 explains that Torihara, due to

this deficiency, is disadvantageous in that display quality depreciates significantly in an oblique direction. For instance, in the oblique direction, the viewer is annoyingly aware of the existence of an outer end of the overlapping thin plate section 204d (see border 'b' in Fig. 6 of the instant application). Thus, when the liquid crystal panel is seen in an oblique direction, the light transmittance is significantly lower outside the border 'b' than inside the border 'b' resulting in a potential discontinuous change in luminance (pg. 7, line 16 to pg. 8, line 8).

Recognizing and admitting this flaw in Torihara, the Office Action cites to JP '486 of Fukuoka (JP 08-320486). Fukuoka discloses a light transmission plate 4a including a slanted/inclined light incident surface b. The Office Action contends that the tip of the slanted/inclined surface b is outside of the display area. The Office Action then contends that it would have been obvious to have used the light transmission plate of JP '486 in the device of Torihara. However, this Section 103(a) rejection is incorrect (in addition to the reasons discussed above) because if the light transmission plate 4a of JP '486 were used in Torihara, and the light transmission plate and light scattering section of Torihara were removed to make room for the new plate 4a of JP '486, then the resulting modified product would *not* include a light scattering section as required by claim 1. Thus, the modified product would not meet the invention of claim 1, and the Section 103(a) rejection would be incorrect for at least this additional second reason.

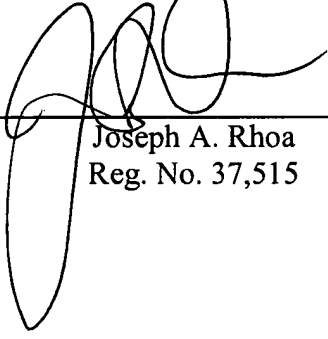
It is respectfully requested that all rejections be withdrawn. All claims are in condition for allowance. If any minor matter remains to be resolved, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned with regard to the same.

TORIHARA, H.
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Respectfully submitted,

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